

Even language

The **Even language** /əˈvɛn/, also known as **Lamut**, **Ewen**, **Eben**, **Orich**, **Илqan** (Russian: Эвѐнский язы́к, earlier also Ламутский язы́к), is a Tungusic language spoken by the Evens in Siberia. It is spoken by widely scattered communities of reindeer herders from Kamchatka and the Sea of Okhotsk in the east to the River Lena in the west, and from the Arctic coast in the north to the River Aldan in the south. Even is an endangered language, with only some 5,700 speakers (Russian census, 2010). These speakers are specifically from the Magadan region, the Chukot region and the Koryak region.^[3] Dialects are Arman, Indigirka, Kamchatka, Kolyma-Omolon, Okhotsk, Ola, Tompon, Upper Kolyma, Sakkyryr, Lamunkhin.^[4]

In these regions where the Evens primarily reside, the Even language is generally implemented in pre-school and elementary school, alongside the national language, Russian. Where Even functioned primarily as an oral language communicated between reindeer herding brigades, textbooks began circulating throughout these educational institutions from around 1925 to 1995.^[5]

The syntax of the Even language follows the nominative case and SOV (subject-object-verb) word order, with the attribute preceding the dependent member.^[5]

Even	
эвэды торэн (evedy toren)	
Native to	Russia
Region	Russian Far East
Ethnicity	21,800 Evens (2010 census) ^[1]
Native speakers	5,700 (2010 census) ^[1]
Language family	<div>Tungusic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern<ul style="list-style-type: none">Even</div>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	eve
Glottolog	even1260 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/even1260) ^[2]

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Language contact

In some remote Arctic villages, such as Russkoye Ustye, whose population descended from Russian-Even intermarriage, the language spoken into the 20th century was a dialect of Russian with a strong Even influence.^[6]

Phonology

Vowels

	<u>Front</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>Back</u>
<u>Close</u>	i i: ɪ ɪ:		u u: ʊ ʊ:
<u>Mid</u>	e e:	ə ə:	o o: ɔ ɔ:
<u>Open</u>		a a:	

Consonants^[7]

		<u>Labial</u>	<u>Alveolar</u>	<u>Lateral</u>	<u>Palatal</u>	<u>Velar</u>	<u>Uvular</u>	<u>Glottal</u>
<u>Stop</u>	<u>voiceless</u>	p	t			k	(q)	
	<u>voiced</u>	b	d			g		
<u>Affricate</u>	<u>voiceless</u>				tʃ			
	<u>voiced</u>				dʒ			
<u>Fricative</u>			s			(ɣ)		h
<u>Nasal</u>		m	n		ɲ	ŋ		
<u>Liquid</u>			r	l				
<u>Approximant</u>		ʊ~w			j			

/ɣ, q/ are allophones of /g, k/.^[8]

Orthography

According to the grammatical structure, Even language belongs to the languages of suffix-agglutinative type. In the Oles' dialect, 18 consonants and up to 20 vowels phonemes are distinguished (including long vowels, as well as diphthongoids *ua*, *ue*). Palatal and labial synharmonism takes place. At name 13 case her, an extensive system of possessive forms (personal, returnable, with the value of alienable possessiveness). According to the features of conjugation, the active action, states and initial states differ.

There are over 15 specific and 6 pledge verb forms, 6 forms participles and 8 forms Extrapartitions, negative and interrogative verbs. The definition is placed before the word being defined and is consistent with it according to number and case. Yakut and Yukagir are reflected in the vocabulary of Western dialects, and Kamchatka-Koryak in the dialects Koryak; from 17th century and Russian vocabulary began to penetrate the Even language.

In the history of the Even literature there are 3 stages:

- until the early 1930s – early attempts to create a script based on Cyrillic;
- 1931-1937 – writing on the Latin basis;
- since 1937 – modern Cyrillic script.

Early alphabets

The first records of individual words of the Even language were published Nicolaas Witsen in 1692. In the XVIII century, separate Even words were published Jacob Johann Lindenau (ru), and also in the comparative dictionary P. S. Pallas (ru), published in 1787–1789.^[9]

In the 1840s, on behalf of the Archbishop of Kamchatka and Aleutian Innokentiy (Veniaminov), work began to translate church texts into Even language.^[10] The work was led by Okhotsk archpriest Stefan Popov, and the Stanitsky foreman Sheludyakov from the Tauisk (ru) second outpost was directly involved in the translation. This determined the choice of the dialect for translation: it was Oleskii dialect. Translation work was carried out in the years 1851-1854.^[11]


The first result of the work of these translators was the publication in 1858 Тунгусского букваря (<http://lel.nlr.ru/edoc/261947/Тунгусский-букварь>) on the Church Slavonic chart. The alphabet of this primer included the following letters: **А а, Б б, В в, Г г, Ё ё, Д д, Е е, И и, Ж ж, К к, Л л, М м, Н н, О о, П п, Р р, Т т, У у, Х х, Ч ч, Ш ш, С с, Ъ ъ, Ы ы, Ь ь, Ъ Ѫ, Э э, Ю ю, Ъ Ѫ**. Following this alphabet were published dictionary (1859, reprinted in 1900) and the Gospel of Matthew (1880).^[12]

In 1926, the Russian-Lamut and Russian-Koryak Dictionary was published in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, which used Russian alphabet. Also, the Russian alphabet was used as the basis for Even writing in a handwritten primer written in 1930 by teacher N. P. Tkachik at the Arkinskaya school.^[13]

Latin

In the 1920s, the Latinized writing process began in USSR. In April 1930, at the VII Plenum of the Committee of the North, it was decided to create alphabets for the peoples of the North. In May 1931 Narkompros of the RSFSR was approved "Unified Northern Alphabet", including its version for Even language.^[13] The approved alphabet had the following form: **A a, Ā ā, B b, C c, D d, 3 3, E e, Ə ə, Ē ē, G g, H h, I i, J j, K k, L l, M m, N n, Ŋ ŋ, O o, ō, P p, R r, S s, T t, U u, W w**.^[14]

External image

 The first issue of the newspaper "Ajzid orocəl" in the Even Latin script, 1931 (<http://www.magadanmuseum.ru/index.php?newsid=615>)

In 1932, the alphabet book **Anḡamta torēn** was published on this alphabet, and then other educational, children's, as well as political literature and certain materials in newspapers began to appear.

In 1933–1934, the alphabet was somewhat modified and eventually began to look like this:^[15]

A a	B b	C c	D d	3 3	E e	Ə ə	Ē ē	F f
G g	H h	I i	J j	K k	L l	M m	N n	Ŋ ŋ
Ŋ ŋ	O o	P p	R r	S s	T t	U u	W w	Z z

This alphabet was officially abolished at the end of 1936, but continued to be used in print until 1939.^[10]

Cyrillic

In 1936–1937, the Even Latin alphabet, like other alphabets of the peoples of the USSR, was replaced by a Cyrillic alphabet that contained all Russian letters and the digraph **Һр һр**.^[16] However, the Even-language newspaper "Орота правда", published in the late 1930s in Magadan, used the additional letter **ə**. In the

official version of the Even script in 1947, the digraph **Һр** was officially canceled, but in 1954 it was restored again.^[17]

In 1953 the digraph **Һр** was replaced by the letter **Ң**, besides the letters **Ө** and **Ӗ** were added.^[18] However, in educational literature (which was published mainly in Leningrad) these letters began to be used only from the beginning of the 1960s, and for a long time they did not find use in literature published in the Even settlement areas.

The vast territory of Even settlement, the differences in dialects, the presence of various letters in typographic fonts caused the fact that different versions of Even script began to spontaneously arise in different regions. Only educational literature for elementary schools, published in Leningrad or Moscow,^[9] remained unified.

Thus, in Yakut ASSR since the beginning of the 1960s, a local form of recording the Even language has been developed, graphically approximated to Yakut Script. In 1982, this form was legalized by the decision of local authorities, but already canceled in 1987, while continuing to be used unofficially for example, in the newspaper "Ilken" (sah). The difference between this form was the use of the sign **Ң** instead of the standard **Ң**, use of additional characters **Б**, **Һ**, **Ү**, **Ө**, **Дь**, **Нь** (**Ү** was not officially entered into the alphabet, but was used in practice), and also the display long vowels by doubling them.^[19]

In Magadan Oblast and in Chukotka, the main difference between the local version of the Even script and the standard version was the use of the sign **Ң'** instead of **Ң**, as well as **О**, **У** instead of **Ө** and **Ӗ** instead of **Ӗ**. Since 1983, the Magadan Region, and since 1993, Chukotka switched to the official alphabet. At the same time, in Chukotka, in the local press, specific signs of the Even written language were not introduced at the same time — first, the **Ң**, then **Ө**, and finally **Ӗ**. In a number of Chukchi Even editions the use of the **Ң'**^[20] sign is noted.

In Kamchatka Oblast, Even language has been used in the local press since the late 1980s. In the local version of the Even alphabet, the alphabet adopted in the 1940s was used. At the beginning of the XXI century, the Even media of Kamchatka (the newspaper "Аборигены Камчатки") switched to the official version of the Even alphabet.^[20]

Thus, outside of school education, which was always and everywhere conducted in the literary Even language, there were 4 regional variants of Even writing and spelling:

1. Literary language based on Eastern dialect (Magadan region, Chukotka)
2. Kamchatka writing form
3. Indigirskaya written form (Yakutia)
4. Sakkyryr written form (Yakutia)

The last two forms have no differences in the alphabet, but differ in terms of spelling.^[9]

Modern Even alphabet

А а	Б б	В в	Г г	Д д	Е е	Ӗ ӗ	Ж ж	З з
И и	Й й	К к	Л л	М м	Н н	Ң ң	О о	Ө ө
Ӗ ӗ	П п	Р р	С с	Т т	У у	Ф ф	Х х	Ц ц
Ч ч	Ш ш	Щ щ	Ъ ъ	Ы ы	Ь ь	Э э	Ю ю	Я я

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External links

- Endangered Languages of Siberia - The Even Language (<http://lingsib.iea.ras.ru/en/language/s/even.shtml>)
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (<https://web.archive.org/web/20110526200913/http://pge.rastko.net/dirs/pge/pge05/100171/e100171.html>) in Even language

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